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## House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. WEBSTER).

### DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,  
February 16, 2012.

I hereby appoint the Honorable DANIEL WEBSTER to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

JOHN A. BOEHNER,  
*Speaker of the House of Representatives.*

### MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 17, 2012, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to 1 hour and each Member other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip limited to 5 minutes each, but in no event shall debate continue beyond 11:50 a.m.

### AFGHANISTAN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. JONES) for 5 minutes.

Mr. JONES. Mr. Speaker, I wish all of the Members of the House could take the time to read the National Intelligence Estimate on Afghanistan. It's classified, but I think they would benefit greatly as both parties continue to try to bring our troops home from Afghanistan sooner than 2013.

I do want to compliment the Secretary of Defense, Mr. Panetta. I did yesterday, in a hearing, and thanked

him for saying that he would start bringing the combat troops home by 2013.

Mr. Speaker, I've been advised on Afghanistan by a military marine general for the last 3 years. I have great respect for him. He is a man of faith, and he has served our country at the highest rank in this particular type of service. I can't say his name because he asked me not to use his name publicly, but this marine general has been my adviser for 3 years. We exchanged emails last week, and I'd like to share for the House a couple of his thoughts on the email that he sent to me last week:

Attempting to find a true military and political answer to the problems in Afghanistan would take decades, not years, and drain our Nation of precious resources—with the most precious being our sons and daughters.

Simply put, the United States cannot solve the Afghan problem no matter how brave and determined our troops are.

We need to bring our people home and prepare for the real danger that is growing in the Pacific.

Again, I have the utmost respect for this man, and I think the American people would if I could say his name.

One of our marines who is serving as a Village Stability Operations team leader in Afghanistan—they're known as VSOs—emailed a friend of his recently, and the friend shared the email with me: "If you ask me if it is worth a single American life to build governance here in Afghanistan, I would have to say no." This man is over there trying to help the Afghan people, but obviously he has no faith. He basically said—and I'm paraphrasing now—that he has absolutely no confidence in the Afghans being able to have a functional, successful military or police force.

I thank him for his thoughts, and I've shared them with the House today.

There is Lieutenant Colonel Danny Davis, who some in both parties have

met with. He spent 9 months in Afghanistan, and 3 weeks ago, he came out publicly. He is an active duty Army colonel, saying that it's time to get our troops out and that there is nothing we're going to change in Afghanistan.

I want to say that I respect the colonel for trying to tell the American people the truth and for telling Congress the truth, which is that we're spending \$10 billion a month to prop up a corrupt leader, and nothing is going to change. That's why I shared the thoughts of the team leader and also of the retired marine general.

In a long Wall Street Journal article of February 10, titled, "Roads to Nowhere: Program to Win over Afghans Fails," I will quote one paragraph:

Three years and nearly \$270 million later, less than 100 miles of gravel road have been completed, according to American officials. More than 125 people were killed and 250 others were wounded in insurgent attacks aimed at derailing the project, USAID said. The agency shut down the road-building effort in December.

Mr. Speaker, this is what both parties are trying to say: We keep spending money we don't have. We're cutting programs for children and senior citizens. We can't help with infrastructure, but we can find \$10 billion a month to prop up a corrupt leader.

Does that make any sense? I think not. The American people have said it makes no sense at all.

I have a photograph—well, a poster, actually, Mr. Speaker. This is a beautiful little girl who is 3 years old. Her mother is in tears, and her grandmother is patting the mother on the shoulder. The little girl is looking at a marine officer, who is presenting a folded flag to the mother.

All I can think about as to that little girl is, one day, she will say to her mother, Tell me about my father.

Her mother will say, Well, your father was a wonderful man, and he gave his life in Afghanistan.

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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